

SENATE BILL No. 311

AN ACT concerning civil procedure and civil actions; relating to noneconomic damages cap; expert or other testimony; repealing statutes pertaining to collateral source benefits; amending K.S.A. 60-456, 60-457, 60-458 and 60-19a02 and repealing the existing sections; also repealing K.S.A. 60-3801, 60-3802, 60-3803, 60-3804, 60-3805, 60-3806 and 60-3807.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Kansas:

Section 1. K.S.A. 60-19a02 is hereby amended to read as follows: 60-19a02. (a) As used in this section “personal injury action” means any action seeking damages for personal injury or death.

(b) In any personal injury action, the total amount recoverable by each party from all defendants for all claims for noneconomic loss shall not exceed a sum total of:

(1) \$250,000 for causes of action accruing on or after July 1, 1988, and before July 1, 2014;

(2) \$300,000 for causes of action accruing on or after July 1, 2014, and before July 1, 2018;

(3) \$325,000 for causes of action accruing on or after July 1, 2018, and before July 1, 2022; or

(4) \$350,000 for causes of action accruing on or after July 1, 2022.

(c) In every personal injury action, the verdict shall be itemized by the trier of fact to reflect the amount awarded for noneconomic loss.

(d) If a personal injury action is tried to a jury, the court shall not instruct the jury on the limitations of this section. If the verdict results in an award for noneconomic loss which exceeds the limit of this section, the court shall enter judgment for ~~\$250,000~~ for all the party’s claims for noneconomic loss in the amount of:

(1) \$250,000 for causes of action accruing on or after July 1, 1988, and before July 1, 2014;

(2) \$300,000 for causes of action accruing on or after July 1, 2014, and before July 1, 2018;

(3) \$325,000 for causes of action accruing on or after July 1, 2018, and before July 1, 2022; or

(4) \$350,000 for causes of action accruing on or after July 1, 2022.

Such entry of judgment by the court shall occur after consideration of comparative negligence principles in K.S.A. 60-258a, and amendments thereto.

(e) The provisions of this section shall not be construed to repeal or modify the limitation provided by K.S.A. 60-1903, and amendments thereto, in wrongful death actions.

(f) The provisions of this section shall apply only to personal injury actions which are based on causes of action accruing on or after July 1, 1988.

Sec. 2. K.S.A. 60-456 is hereby amended to read as follows: 60-456.

(a) If the witness is not testifying as an expert ~~his or her~~, *the testimony* in the form of opinions or inferences is limited to such opinions or inferences as the judge finds ~~(a): (1) May be~~ *Are* rationally based on the perception of the witness; ~~and (b) (2) are helpful to a clearer understanding of his or her testimony~~ *the testimony of the witness; and (3) are not based on scientific, technical or other specialized knowledge within the scope of subsection (b).*

(b) ~~If the witness is testifying as an expert, testimony of the witness in the form of opinions or inferences is limited to such opinions as the judge finds are (1) based on facts or data perceived by or personally known or made known to the witness at the hearing and (2) within the scope of the special knowledge, skill, experience or training possessed by the witness. If scientific, technical or other specialized knowledge will help the trier of fact to understand the evidence or to determine a fact in issue, a witness who is qualified as an expert by knowledge, skill, experience, training or education may testify thereto in the form of an opinion or otherwise if: (1) The testimony is based on sufficient facts or data; (2) the testimony is the product of reliable principles and methods; and (3) the witness has reliably applied the principles and methods to the facts of the case.~~

(c) Unless the judge excludes the testimony ~~he or she~~, *the judge* shall be deemed to have made the finding requisite to its admission.

(d) Testimony in the form of opinions or inferences otherwise admissible under this article is not objectionable because it embraces the ultimate issue or issues to be decided by the trier of the fact.

Sec. 3. K.S.A. 60-457 is hereby amended to read as follows: 60-457.

(a) *If a witness is not testifying as an expert, the judge may require that a witness before testifying in terms of opinion or inference be first examined concerning the facts or data upon which the opinion or inference is founded.*

(b) *If a witness is testifying as an expert, upon motion of a party, the court may hold a pretrial hearing to determine whether the witness qualifies as an expert and whether the witness's testimony satisfies the requirements of subsection (b) of K.S.A. 60-456, and amendments thereto. The court shall allow sufficient time for a hearing. The court shall rule on the qualifications of the witness to testify as an expert and whether or not the testimony satisfies the requirements of subsection (b) of K.S.A. 60-456, and amendments thereto. Such hearing and ruling shall be completed no later than the final pretrial conference contemplated under subsection (d) of K.S.A. 60-216, and amendments thereto.*

Sec. 4. K.S.A. 60-458 is hereby amended to read as follows: 60-458. ~~Questions calling for the opinion of an expert witness need not be hypothetical in form unless the judge in his or her discretion so requires, but the witness may state his or her opinion and reasons therefor without first specifying data on which it is based as an hypothesis or otherwise, but upon cross-examination the witness may be required to specify such data. The facts or data in the particular case upon which an expert bases an opinion or inference may be those perceived by or made known to the expert. If of a type reasonably relied upon by experts in the particular field in forming opinions or inferences upon the subject, the facts or data need not be admissible into evidence in order for the opinion or inference to be admitted. Facts or data that are otherwise inadmissible shall not be disclosed to the jury by the proponent of the opinion or inference unless the court determines that the probative value of such facts or data in assisting the jury to evaluate the expert's opinion substantially outweighs any prejudicial effect.~~

New Sec. 5. If any provision or clause of this act or the application thereof to any person or circumstance is held to be invalid, such invalidity shall not affect the other provisions or applications of the act, and to this end the provisions of this act are declared to be severable.

Sec. 6. K.S.A. 60-456, 60-457, 60-458, 60-19a02, 60-3801, 60-3802, 60-3803, 60-3804, 60-3805, 60-3806 and 60-3807 are hereby repealed.

Sec.7. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after its publication in the statute book.

I hereby certify that the above BILL originated in the SENATE, and passed that body

SENATE adopted
Conference Committee Report _____

President of the Senate.

Secretary of the Senate.

Passed the HOUSE
as amended _____

HOUSE adopted
Conference Committee Report _____

Speaker of the House.

Chief Clerk of the House.

APPROVED _____

Governor.